

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 001966

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PFOR, AR, US

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR ORFILA

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

1. FOLLOWING FYI ONLY:

2. SECRETARY MET FOR ABOUT 20 MINUTES AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 3 WITH AMBASSADOR ORFILA. ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS, FIRST SECRETARY OF ARGENTINE EMBASSY BEAUGE AND DEPUTY COUNTRY DIRECTOR FAUCETT WERE ALSO PRESENT.

3. PURPOSE OF AMBASSADOR'S VISIT WAS TO RELAY FOREIGN MINISTER VIGNES' RESPONSE TO THE SECRETARY'S LETTERS CONCERNING BOTH HIS PROPOSED FEBRUARY VISIT TO ARGENTINA AND THE PROBLEM OF HANDLING CUBAN ATTENDANCE AT THE BA MF. ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF APPROACHING THE PROBLEM OF WHETHER OR NOT TO INVITE THE CUBANS WERE EXPLORED. ORFILA INDICATED THAT VIGNES' POSITION WAS FLEXIBLE AND THAT HE WANTED VERY MUCH TO REACH MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY POSITIONS

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PAGE 02 STATE 001966

ON ALL POINTS WITH US FIRST. HE SAID THAT MAJOR GOA

CONCERN IS THAT IF CUBA IS INVITED A NUMBER OF OTHER COUNTRIES MAY NOT ATTEND, AND THIS WOULD PLACE IN JEOPARDY MANY OF THE BENEFITS OF THE MFM. ALTHOUGH THE

GOA FAVORS NOT INVITING THE CUBANS, FAILURE TO DO SO WILL BE IDENTIFIED AS AN ARGENTINE POSITION AND WOULD ENTAIL DOMESTIC POLITICAL COSTS. IN EITHER CASE, THE GOA MUST BE CAUTIOUS.

4. ORFILA SUGGESTED THAT A POSSIBLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM MIGHT BE FOR THE MINISTERS TO ANNOUNCE AT BA THAT THEY HAVE ARRANGED THE LIFTING OF THE SANCTIONS BY A SIMPLE MAJORITY AT THE APRIL OAS MEETINGS.

5. THE POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING ASSURANCES FROM THE CUBANS PRIOR TO THE MEETING TO THE EFFECT THAT THEY WOULD NOT PROVOKE INCIDENTS OR OTHERWISE "MISBEHAVE" WAS DISCUSSED. THE SECRETARY THOUGHT THAT TO GO SO QUICKLY FROM THE SITUATION IN QUITO TO THEIR FULL PARTICIPATION AT BUENOS AIRES WOULD BE TOO ABRUPT. HE SUGGESTED THAT HIS IMMEDIATE REACTION TO ASKING THE CUBANS TO AGREE TO CEASE "MEDDLING" WAS THAT IT MIGHT HAVE A GREATER NEGATIVE IMPACT THAN SIMPLY NOT INVITING THEM.

6. HE EMPHASIZED THAT HIS COMMENTS WERE FIRST REACTIONS AND THAT HE WOULD LIKE A WEEK TO THINK FURTHER ABOUT THE MATTER. HE POINTED OUT THAT WHATEVER IS DONE THE USG WILL HAVE POLITICAL PROBLEMS. ORFILA AGREED THAT THE GOA WOULD TAKE NO ACTION UNTIL THE SECRETARY HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXAMINE MORE THOROUGHLY THE ALTERNATIVES. BOTH AGREED THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAKE THE BA MFM AS HARMONIOUS AND PRODUCTIVE AS POSSIBLE. WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS. END FYI. KISSINGER

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